THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV) : (a) to (e) In statements made in both the Houses of Parliament on 24.2.97, the Government have proposed the introduction of Targeted Public Distribution System with Central Issue Prices as under :—

(Rs. per kg.)

	Rice			Wheat
	Common	Fine	Superfine	
Below Poverty Line	3.50	3.50	—	2.50
Above Poverty Line	—	6.50	7.50	4.50

The aforesaid prices show a decrease in the prices for B.P.L., and increase in the prices for A.P.L. population.

So far as sugar is concerned, the price has been raised from Rs. 9.05 to Rs. 10.50 per kg. w.e.f. 10.2.1997. Important reasons for the revisions include increases in the Minimum Support Prices, higher cost of procurement incidentals, increase in statutory minimum price of sugarcane and over all inflation.

Central Issue Prices of rice and wheat and retail price of levy sugar have been as under in the last three years :—

Central Issue Prices of Rice & Wheat

(Rs. per quintal)

Effective from	Rice			Wheat
	Common	Fine	Superfine	
11.1.93	437	497	518	330
1.2.94	537	617	648	402

Retail Issue Price of Levy Sugar

(Rs. per kg.)

17.2.93	Rs. 8.30
1.2.94	Rs. 9.05
10.2.97	Rs. 10.50

WWF's Report on Population of Tigers

1727. SHRI SATYAJITSINH DULIPSINH GAIKWAD : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to the news item captioned "Saviours of Tiger Fight for Funds" appearing in the 'Asian Age', dated December 18, 1996;

(b) if so, the facts thereof;

(c) the precise concern expressed or conveyed to the Government by the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) about the fast depleting population of the Indian Tigers; and

(d) the reaction of the Government thereto ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ): (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. Concern has been expressed over the threat faced by Indian Tiger. Government is already taking all possible measures to save the tiger. World Wildlife Fund — India (WWF—India) have been associated as member of Indian Board of Wildlife, Steering Committee of Project Tiger and Tiger Crisis Cell.

Cost of Processing Milk

1728. SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR : Will the Minister of ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING be pleased to state :

(a) whether in the Dairy Sector the cost of processing milk is very high;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government to lower the cost of processing milk ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI RAGHUVANS PRASAD SINGH) : (a) to (c) The cost of processing of milk can be reduced by having larger capacity plants so as to make use of economies of scale. But in India, milk production being scattered, it is often not feasible to have large capacity plants. But efforts have been made to put up state of art technology dairy plants in areas of high milk production thereby saving on cost of processing.

Number of Gorkhas and Nepalese

1729. SHRI BHIM PRASAD DAHAL : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) the total number of Indian Gorkhas/Indian Nepalese; and

(b) whether sub Castes like Rai, Limbu, Tamang, Gurungs, Mangar, Bahun, Chhetri, Newar, Sanyasi, Bhujel, Thami, Kami, Damai, were counted as Indian Nepalese/ Indian Gorkhas of Darjeeling hills, Sikkim, Assam, Dehradun, Himachal Pradesh and North-East States of India ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MOHD. MAQBOOL DAR) : (a) and (b) These details are not collected at the Census and hence are not available.